

Description of Course Unit

according to the ECTS User's Guide 2015

Course unit title	International Relations Theories
Course unit code	
Type of course unit (compulsory, optional)	Compulsory
Level of course unit (according to EQF: first cycle Bachelor, second cycle Master)	second cycle Master
Year of study when the course unit is delivered (if applicable)	2
Semester/trimester when the course unit is delivered	3
Number of ECTS credits allocated	6
Name of lecturer(s)	Nguyen Tuan Khanh, PhD.
Learning outcomes of the course unit	After completing the course, students will be able to: ● <i>Grasp</i> the general approaches to research methods ● <i>Distinguish</i> different approaches to research in IR ● <i>Identify</i> the components of a research in international relations ● <i>Apply</i> theories of international relations to analyze key issues in IR ● <i>Cultivate</i> independent critical thinking skills ● <i>Develop</i> the ability for self-learning and analyzing various perspectives on issues in international politics ● <i>Master</i> reading comprehension and categorization skills ● <i>Understand and respect</i> differences, distinguishing between different aspects of an issue or between various perspectives in international politics
Mode of delivery (face-to-face, distance learning)	Face-to-face
Prerequisites and co- requisites (if applicable)	International Relation History, International Relations Theories

Course content	1. Methodology and Methods in IR 2. Research Question and Design 3. Research Ethics 4. Literature Review 5. Qualitative methods 6. Quantitative methods 7. Fieldwork and Interview research 8. Discourse Analysis in International Relations 9. Case Study Research in International Relations
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Recommended or required reading and other learning resources/tools	Required: Christopher Lamont (2022), <i>Research Methods in International Relations</i> – Second edition, Sage Suggested: Aradau, Claudia and Huysmans, Jef (2013) ‘Critical methods in international relations: The politics of techniques, devices, and acts’, <i>European Journal of International Relations</i>, 20 (3): 596–619. Gustafsson, Karl and Hagström, Linus (2018) ‘What is the point? Teaching graduate students how to construct Political Science research puzzles’, <i>European Political Science</i>, 17: 634–48 Reiter, Dan (2014) ‘The positivist study of gender and International Relations’, <i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i>, 59 (7): 1301–26 Rambukkana, Nathan (2019) ‘The politics of gray data: Digital methods, intimate proximity, and research ethics for work on the “Alt-Right”’, <i>Qualitative Inquiry</i>, 25 (3): 312–23. Andersen, Morton Skumsrud (2012) ‘Legitimacy in state-building: A review of the IR literature’, <i>International Political Sociology</i>, 6 (2): 205–19 Hardy, Cynthia, Harley, Bill and Phillips, Nelson (2004) ‘Discourse analysis and content analysis: Two solitudes?’, <i>Qualitative Methods</i>, 2 (1): 19–22 Bull, Hedley (1966) ‘International theory: The case for a classical approach’, <i>World Politics</i>, 18 (3): 361–77 Cronin-Furman, K. and Lake, M. (2018) ‘Ethics abroad: Fieldwork in fragile and violent contexts’, <i>PS: Political Science & Politics</i>, 51 (3): 607–14 Richards, David (1996) ‘Elite interviewing: Approaches and pitfalls’, <i>Politics</i>, 16 (3): 199–204 Milliken, Jennifer (1999) ‘The study of discourse in International Relations: A critique of research methods’, <i>European Journal of International Relations</i>, 5 (2): 225–54 Gerring, John (2004) ‘What is a case study and what is it good for?’, <i>American Political Science Review</i>, 98 (2): 341–54
Planned learning activities and teaching methods	This course is research-based model of learning. See Learning Activities Plan in the table below
Language of instruction	Vietnamese
Assessment methods and criteria	Formative assessment: Midterm: Quiz, Review articles (30%) Final: Assignment paper (70%)

Learning activities Plan

Sessions	Specific Objectives/ learning outcomes	Contents	Teaching & Learning Activities		Assessment
			Face-to-face	Self-study or study via LMS	
1. Methodology and Methods in IR	- Explain the meaning of methodological plurality in IR - Understand how theory and methodology are interrelated - Explain methodological positions of positivist, interpretive, critical and normative research in IR - Understand how methodology, research design, and research methods relate to one another - Explain key terms: methodology, epistemology and ontology - Gain an understanding of underlying logic of key research choices during the research process	- IR Theory and Methodology - Positivism and Interpretivism in IR Research - How Methodology Matters - Methodological Pluralism in IR Research - Navigating Research Practice: Methodology, Theory, and Research Design - Crafting Research Project	- Lecturing - Grouping the student for research projects - Discussion in group: What are ethical issues/dilemmas in research?	Required reading: Lamont (2022), “Methodology and Methods in International Relations”, pp. 11-34 Suggested reading: Aradau, Claudia and Huysmans, Jef (2013) ‘Critical methods in international relations: The politics of techniques, devices, and acts’, European Journal of International Relations, 20 (3): 596–619.	N/a
2. Research Question and Design	- Identify elements of a good research question - Understand different modes of reasoning in IR research - Understand and explain differences in logic among positivist, interpretivist, critical theory, and normative theory research questions - Explain both positivist and interpretivist research approaches to causality - Explain the logic of positivist, interpretivist,	- Question-Based Research: A Definition - From Research Topic to Research Question - Crafting Research Question - From Research Question to Research Design - Research Design: Research Question to Case Study	- Lecturing - Students choose a research topic, and title it as instructed in class. - Students carefully frame the research question, and form one hypothesis concerning the chosen topic.	Student read the text book before class: Lamont (2022), “Research Questions and Research Design”, pp. 37-60 Group-work discussion for Research question, Hypothesis and Title of the Project	Research portfolio: Group minute on discussion for Research question, Hypothesis and Title of the Project

	critical theory, and normative theory research design - Apply self-reflection to overcome obstacles to formulating a research question and research design		- Class discussion on the research topic, questions, and hypotheses	Suggested reading: - Gustafsson, Karl and Hagström, Linus (2018) ‘What is the point? Teaching graduate students how to construct Political Science research puzzles’, European Political Science, 17: 634–48 - Reiter, Dan (2014) ‘The positivist study of gender and International Relations’, Journal of Conflict Resolution, 59 (7): 1301–26	
3. Research Ethics	- Explain concepts of positionality and reflexivity - Gain an awareness of dilemmas of research funding - Understand plagiarism and how to avoid its different forms - Identify examples of data fabrication and an understanding of how research fraud undermines public confidence in research - Reflect upon the potential for harm to participants in research project	- Reflexivity and Positionality in Research Questions and Data Collection - Plagiarism and Fabrication of Research Results	- Lecturing - Student discussion on plagiarism	Required reading textbook, pp. 64-78 Suggested reading: - Rambukkana, Nathan (2019) ‘The politics of gray data: Digital methods, intimate proximity, and research ethics for work on the “Alt-Right”’, Qualitative Inquiry, 25 (3): 312–23.	Quiz 1: Research question
4. Literature Review	- Identify the purpose of a literature review - Understand what makes a good literature review - Implement strategies for carrying out an effective literature search - Explain the basic structure of a literature review	- Why Write a Literature Review? - Types of Literature and Literature Reviews - How to Begin: Familiarizing Yourself with the Literature - What to Include in Your	- Lecturing - Discussion in group - Analyzing sample literature	Student read the text book before class: Lamont (2022), Writing a Literature Review, pp. 79-92 Group-work: discussion for Literature collecting	Quiz 2: Analyzing sample literature review (in-class) Research portfolio: Group minute on discussion for Literature collecting

	- Gain proficiency in writing literature reviews	Literature Review? - Literature Reviews on New or Innovative Topics in IR - Writing a Literature Review - Avoiding Pitfalls: Strawman Argumentation		Suggested reading: - Andersen, Morton Skumsrud (2012) 'Legitimacy in state-building: A review of the IR literature', International Political Sociology, 6 (2): 205–19	
5. Qualitative methods	- Understand the advantages and limitations of qualitative research in IR - Explain and apply basic qualitative data collection techniques: interviews, focus groups, archival or document-based research, digital research and visual methods - Gain familiarity with triangulation, thick description and process tracing - Explain and apply qualitative data analysis strategies: content analysis, discourse analysis, visual analysis	- Qualitative Methods and Philosophy of Science - Collecting Qualitative Data: Interviews Focus Groups; Archival and Document-based Research; Digital Research; Visual Data - Tools of Qualitative Analysis: Triangulation, Thick Description, and Process Tracing - Qualitative Data Analysis: Content Analysis, Discourse Analysis and Visual Analysis, Narrative analysis	- Lecturing - Students find the material following the group topics - Group-working on choosing strategy collecting and processing data	Student read the text book before class: Lamont (2022), "Qualitative methods in IR", pp. 93-112 Suggested reading: - Hardy, Cynthia, Harley, Bill and Phillips, Nelson (2004) 'Discourse analysis and content analysis: Two solitudes?', Qualitative Methods, 2 (1): 19–22	Quiz 3: Lit. review
6. Quantitative methods	- Define quantitative methods and consider their advantages and disadvantages - Learn how to operationalize, measure, and code concepts so they can be used in quantitative analysis, while also considering levels of measurement - Identify ways to gather quantitative data through existing datasets, surveys, and content analysis - Learn about bivariate statistical tests - Gain an understanding of regression analysis	- Quantitative Methods in International Relations: What Are They? And Why Use Them? - Conceptual Definitions, Operational Definitions, and Coding - Variables, Units of Analysis and Levels of Measurement - Survey Design and Generating Your Own Quantitative Data	- Lecturing - Students find the material following the group topics - Group-working on choosing strategy collecting and processing data	Student read the text book before class: Lamont (2022), "Quantitative methods in IR", pp. 115-37 Group-work: discussion methods using for the project Suggested reading: - Bull, Hedley (1966) 'International theory: The case for a classical approach', World Politics,	N/a

	- Understand how formal models can help us understand strategic interactions	- Statistical Analysis - Formal Methods and Game Theory in IR		18 (3): 361–77	
7. Fieldwork and Interview research	- Identify and explain commonly used fieldwork activities - Understand controversies regarding fieldwork with special attention to its potential advantages and limitations - Explain and justify why fieldwork might be necessary for a research project - Explain strategies for securing access to research participants - Understand the importance of ethics and consent in fieldwork - Explain the different purposes of conducting interviews for researchers of IR - Explain how positionality impacts the interview process - Understand and apply those data and analysis strategies (quantitative v. qualitative) that are best suited for the kinds of data produced by structured, semi-structured, and unstructured interviews - Understand how to gain access to research participants - Gain a familiarity with how to conduct interviews - Understand transcription techniques to store interview data for future quantitative or qualitative analysis	- What is Fieldwork? - Fieldwork in IR: Ethical Considerations - Why Fieldwork? - Practical Considerations for Fieldwork - Doing Fieldwork: Access and Trust - Fieldwork and Informed Consent - Fieldwork in Practice - Interview Research in IR - Interview Formats and What Kind of Information Do You Want to Collect? - Structured, Semi-Structured and Unstructured Interviews - Selecting Your Interview Participants - Approaching Interview Participants - Preparing for Your Interviews - Things to Consider During Your Interviews - After Your Interviews: Tips and Guidelines for Securing Your Data	- Lecturing - Discussion in group	Student read the text book pp. 159-193 before class Suggested reading: - Cronin-Furman, K. and Lake, M. (2018) 'Ethics abroad: Fieldwork in fragile and violent contexts', PS: Political Science & Politics, 51 (3): 607–14 - Richards, David (1996) 'Elite interviewing: Approaches and pitfalls', Politics, 16 (3): 199–204	Research portfolio: Group minute on discussion methods using for the project
8. Discourse Analysis in International Relations	- Explain how language and discourse matter in IR - Understand key terms and concepts associated with discourse analysis	- What is Discourse? - Making Sense of Discourse Analysis - Critical Discourse Analysis	- Lecturing - Discussion in group	Student read the text book pp. 195-208 before class Suggested reading:	Quiz 4: Interview research

	- Explain how discourse analysis can serve both interpretive and positivist research agendas - Explain core characteristics and aims of critical discourse analysis - Use critical discourse analysis in your own research - Understand and apply discourse analysis for positivist research	- How to Conduct a Critical Discourse Analysis - Discourse Analysis for Positivist Research - How to Conduct Discourse Analysis for Positivist Research		- Milliken, Jennifer (1999) 'The study of discourse in International Relations: A critique of research methods', European Journal of International Relations, 5 (2): 225–54	
9. Case Study in Research International Relations	- Explain how case study research can contribute to theory-building and theory testing in IR - Understand and apply comparative method in case study design - Explain and justify comparative case selection strategies - Account for interpretive strategies of case study design	- What is a Case Study? - Case Study Research: Theory and Methodology - Case Study Research: Research Questions - How Can I Justify My Case Selection?	- Lecturing - Discussion in group	Student read the text book pp. 209-225 before class Suggested reading: - Gerring, John (2004) 'What is a case study and what is it good for?', American Political Science Review, 98 (2): 341–54	N/a

